

News from Rep. Stephanie Herseth
For Immediate Release
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HERSETH VISITS AFGHANISTAN WITH CONGRESSIONAL
DELEGATION

Meets with President Karzai; Focuses on Growth of Agriculture
Industry

January 12, 2005, Washington D.C. - U.S. Rep. Stephanie
Herseth today met with President Hamid Karzai and other Afghan
government officials in Kabul as part of a Congressional Delegation of
House Agriculture Committee members. Herseth and her group focused on
non-military aspects of Afghanistan's reconstruction, and particularly on the
progress of its agriculture industry.

Herseth said, "Long-term recovery in Afghanistan depends not only on
military security, but also on the re-establishment of vital industries like
agriculture. There is great potential for agriculture to help drive the recovery
of Afghanistan, as it continues its transition to a post-Taliban economy and
society. The United States is playing a key role in this transition and
growth, and there are already officials from the United States Department
of Agriculture on the ground helping to reestablish infrastructure, including
 irrigation systems and access roads to marketplace."

Herseth noted that many Afghan producers are transitioning from the
poppy production that was prevalent during the reign of the Taliban. USDA
officials and Provincial Recovery Teams, or PRT's, are aiding in the
transition. Herseth met with PRT members who are using Test Plots to

determine yield expectations for a range of agricultural products in different parts of the country.

Herseth also met with soldiers and military officials throughout the day, including Major Harold Walker of Sturgis, SD. Major Walker is currently the only South Dakota soldier in Afghanistan.

The delegation included Rep. Bob Goodlatte (R-VA), who is chairman of the Agriculture Committee, Rep. Frank Lucas (R-OK), Rep. Jerry Moran (R-KS), Rep. Jean Schmidt (R-OH), and Rep. David Scott (D-GA). The delegation visited both Kabul and Kandahar.

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